Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 2, 3, 14, 20, and 25 – 27; and amend Claims 1, 9, 11, 13, 19, and 24 as indicated in the following listing of claims, which replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing a geographical distribution of business representatives, the method comprising:

receiving, with a microprocessor-based system, a trace defining a closed geographical area, the trace being received as a representation of a line drawn by a user on an interface displaying a map having a plurality of geographical units to select a portion of the map, each geographical unit being associated with information indicating assignment of the each geographical unit to a business representative;

identifying, with the microprocessor-based system, at least one geographical unit contained within and surrounded by a boundary of the closed geographical area, the at least one geographical unit and the closed geographical area being noncoextensive;

modifying, with the microprocessor-based system, the map displayed on the interface to highlight the identified at least one geographical unit;

identifying, with the microprocessor-based system, the business representative assigned to the at least one geographical unit for display to the user; ~~and~~

receiving, with the microprocessor-based system, information ~~regarding~~ provided by the user specifying a change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to a new business representative ~~in response to input from a user~~; and

modifying, with the microprocessor-based system, a stored characteristic associated with the at least one geographical unit to reflect the change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to the new business representative.

2. – 3. (Canceled).

4. (Original) The method recited in claim 1 wherein receiving a trace defining a closed geographical area comprises receiving a freehand trace.

5. (Original) The method recited in claim 4 wherein the freehand trace is provided with a pen and digitizing tablet.

6. (Original) The method recited in claim 4 wherein the freehand trace is provided with a touch screen.

7. (Original) The method recited in claim 1 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by a hierarchy of geographical units.

8. (Original) The method recited in claim 1 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by an established set of geographical units.

9. (Currently Amended) The method recited in claim ~~25~~ 1 wherein modifying the stored characteristic ~~of~~ associated with the at least one geographical unit comprises removing the at least one geographical unit from an established set of geographical units.

10. (Original) The method recited in claim 8 further comprising updating an assignment of business representatives to geographical units in accordance with a change in the established set of geographical units.

11. (Currently Amended) The method recited in claim ~~25~~ 1 wherein modifying the stored characteristic of the at least one geographical unit comprises adding the at least one geographical unit to an established set of geographical units.

12. (Original) The method recited in claim 1 further comprising displaying an assignment of a plurality of business representatives to a plurality of geographical units graphically.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium having a computer-readable program embodied therein for directing operation of a computer system including an input device, a display device, a processor, and a storage device, wherein the computer-readable program includes instructions for operating the computer system to manage a geographical distribution of business representatives in accordance with the following:

receiving a trace from the input device defining a closed geographical area, the trace being received as a representation of a line drawn by a user on the display device displaying a map having a plurality of geographical units to select a portion of the map, each geographical unit being associated with information indicating assignment of the each geographical unit to a business representative;

identifying at least one geographical unit contained within and surrounded by a boundary of the closed geographical area with the processor, the at least one geographical unit and the closed geographical area being noncoextensive;

modifying the map displayed on the display device to highlight the identified at least one geographical unit;

identifying the business representative assigned to the at least one geographical unit for display to the user on the display device; ~~and~~

receiving information ~~regarding~~ provided by the user specifying a change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to a new business representative ~~in response to input from a user~~; and

modifying a stored characteristic associated with the at least one geographical unit on the storage device to reflect the change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to the new business representative.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium recited in claim 13 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by a hierarchy of geographical units.

16. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium recited in claim 13 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by an established set of geographical units.

17. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium recited in claim 16 wherein the computer-readable program further includes instructions for updating an assignment of business representatives to geographical units in accordance with a change in the established set of geographical units.

18. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium recited in claim 13 wherein the computer-readable program further includes instructions for displaying an assignment of a plurality of business representatives to a plurality of geographical units graphically on the display device.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:

an input device;

a storage device;

a display device;

a processor in communication with the input device, the display device, and the storage device; and

a memory coupled with the processor, the memory comprising a computer-readable storage medium having a computer-readable program embodied therein for operating the computer system to manage a geographical distribution of business representatives, the computer-readable program including:

instructions for receiving a trace from the input device defining a closed geographical area, the trace being received as a representation of a line drawn by a user on the display device displaying a map having a plurality of geographical units to select a portion of the map, each geographical unit being associated with information indicating assignment of the each geographical unit to a business representative;

instructions for identifying at least one geographical unit contained within and surrounded by a boundary of the closed geographical area with the processor, the at least one geographical unit and the closed geographical area being noncoextensive;

instructions for modifying the map displayed on the display device to highlight the identified at least one geographical unit;

instructions for identifying the business representative assigned to the at least one geographical unit for display to the user on the display device; ~~and~~

instructions for receiving information ~~regarding~~ provided by the user specifying a change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to a new business representative ~~in response to input from a user~~; and

instructions for modifying a stored characteristic associated with the at least one geographical unit on the storage device to reflect the change in assignment of the at least one geographical unit to the new business representative.

20. (Canceled).

21. (Original) The computer system recited in claim 19 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by a hierarchy of geographical units.

22. (Original) The computer system recited in claim 19 wherein the at least one geographical unit is comprised by an established set of geographical units.

23. (Original) The computer system recited in claim 22 wherein the computer-readable program further includes instructions for updating an assignment of business

representatives to geographical units in accordance with a change in the established set of geographical units.

24. (Currently Amended) The computer system recited in claim 19 ~~further comprising a display device in communication with the processor,~~ wherein the computer-readable program further includes instructions for displaying an assignment of a plurality of business representatives to a plurality of geographical units graphically on the display device.

25. – 27. (Canceled).